

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Previously Presented) A system for accessing computer-readable files stored on a source device, by a plurality of target computers comprising:

[means] a controller for creating a disk image of the source device, wherein said source device is a physical storage volume on which said computer-readable files to be accessed by said plurality of target computers are located, and for storing said disk image on a storage device that is accessible to said plurality of target computers, wherein said disk image is a virtual representation of said physical storage volume such that it includes volume format information that reflects the format of said physical storage volume, and which enables said disk image to be mounted at each of said plurality of target computers; and a disk image driver at each of said plurality of target computers having access to file format information which enables said target computers to read files, which exhibit different file formats, contained on said disk image.

2. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein said disk image driver includes an index which identifies correspondence between address location in said storage volume and address locations in said disk image.

3. (Original) The system of claim 2 wherein said disk image contains a compressed version of data in said files, and wherein said index further includes information pertaining to the manner in which the data was compressed.

4. (Original) The system of claim 3 wherein the data in said disk image is divided into individual chunks which are separately compressed and said index contains, for each chunk, the address of the chunk of data in the file, the address for the corresponding compressed data in the disk image, and an identification of a compression algorithm via which the data of that chunk was compressed.

5. (Original) The system of claim 4 wherein different chunks of data are compressed via different respective algorithms.

6. (Original) The system of claim 4 wherein different chunks of data have different respective sizes.

7. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein said disk image driver includes data pertaining to different types of file systems, to thereby enable said disk image driver to access disk images stored in different disk image file formats respectively related to said different types of file systems.

8. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein said disk image is stored on the storage device in a compressed read/only format comprising a file which contains compressed versions of chunks of data stored in said physical storage volume, and an index which provides a mapping between logical address blocks in said physical storage volume and addresses of corresponding compressed data in said file.

9. (Original) The system of claim 8, wherein said index contains information pertaining to the manner in which the chunks of data were compressed.

10. (Original) The system of claim 9, wherein the data in said volume is divided into individual chunks which are separately compressed and said index contains, for each chunk, the address of the chunk of data in said physical storage volume, the address for the corresponding compressed data in said disk image, and an identification of a compression algorithm via which the data of that chunk was compressed.

11. (Original) The system of claim 10, wherein different chunks of data are compressed via different respective algorithms.

12. (Original) The system of claim 10, wherein different chunks of data have different respective sizes.

13. (Original) The system of claim 10, wherein said uncompressed read/only format also has an associated index which provides a mapping between logical address blocks in said physical storage volume and addresses of corresponding data in the file.

14. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein said disk image is stored on the storage device in a read/write format comprising a file which contains a copy of every logical address block in said physical storage volume, regardless of whether the blocks contain data.

15. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein said disk image is stored on the storage device in an uncompressed read/only format comprising a file which contains volume information and a copy of only those logical address blocks of the physical storage volume which contain data.

16. (Original) A method for providing a remote computer access to files stored on a source device, comprising the steps of:

creating a disk image of said source device, wherein said source device is a physical storage volume which contains said files to be accessed by said remote computer, and wherein said disk image is a virtual representation of said physical storage volume in that said disk image includes volume format information that reflects the format of said physical storage volume;
generating a script file which includes an identification of said disk image;
launching said script file at said remote computer; and
mounting, at said remote computer, the disk image identified in said script file using a disk image driver that has access to volume format information which is needed to mount files, exhibiting different file formats, on the disk image.

17. (Original) The method of claim 16 wherein said script file also includes an identification of an executable program, and further including the step of running said program at the remote computer after mounting said disk image.

18. (Original) The method of claim 17 wherein said program is an installer program which installs files from the mounted disk image onto the remote computer.

19. (Original) The method of claim 16 wherein a plurality of disk images are created and identified in said script file, and wherein all of the disk images identified in said script file are mounted at said remote computer.

20. (Original) The method of claim 16 further comprising the step of:
selectively storing said disk image in a storage medium device in anyone of the following disk image file formats:

a read/write format comprising a file which contains a copy of every logical address block in said physical storage volume, regardless of whether the blocks contain data;
an uncompressed read/only format comprising a file which contains volume information and a copy of only those logical address blocks of said physical storage volume which contain data; and
a compressed read/only format comprising a file which contains compressed versions of chunks of data stored in said physical storage volume, and an index which

provides a mapping between logical address blocks in said physical storage volume and addresses of corresponding compressed data in said file.

21. (Currently Amended) A system for accessing computer-readable files having a source computer and a target computer, the source computer comprising:

a physical storage volume; and

a memory for storing a disk image of the storage volume, the disk image being a mountable virtual representation of the physical storage volume and including an image of a plurality of computer-readable files stored on the storage volume, at least two of the plurality of computer-readable files having different file formats, each of which is capable of being read by a disk image driver resident at the target computer.

22. (Currently Amended) A system for accessing computer-readable files having a source computer and a target computer, the target computer comprising:

a processor; and

a memory, coupled to the processor, for storing a disk image driver that, when executed by the processor, enables a disk image resident at the source computer to be mounted at the target computer, the disk image being a virtual representation of a physical storage volume coupled to the source computer, the disk image including a plurality of computer-readable files stored on the storage volume, at least two of the plurality of computer-readable files having different file formats, each of which is capable of being read by the disk image driver.

23. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 22, wherein the disk image is mounted at the target computer as a local volume having a file system format that is different than the file system format of the storage volume.

24. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 22, wherein the disk image is mounted at the target computer as a remote volume, which can be accessed by the target computer through a communication network.

25. (Currently Amended) A system for accessing computer-readable files, comprising:

a source computer coupled to a first physical storage device having a first file format and a second physical storage device having a second file format, the source computer further coupled to a memory for storing a multiple-format disk image of the storage devices, the multiple-format disk image being a mountable virtual representation of the physical storage devices and including information indicative of the first and second file formats; and
a target computer coupled to a memory for storing a disk image driver, the disk image driver capable of reading the first and second file formats when executed by a processor located at the target computer.

26. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 25, wherein the first format is an uncompressed read/write format and the second format is an uncompressed read/only format.

27. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 25, wherein the first format is an uncompressed read/write format and the second format is a compressed read/only format.

28. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 25, wherein the first format is an uncompressed read/only format and the second format is a compressed read/only format.

29. (Currently Amended) A method of accessing computer-readable files, comprising:
mounting a multiple-format disk image of a physical storage volume created by a source computer, the multiple-format disk image being a virtual representation of the physical storage volume and including volume information describing a plurality of file system formats employed by one or more storage volumes; and, at a target computer; and
reading the volume information from the disk image.

30. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium having stored thereon instructions which, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to perform the steps of:
mounting a multiple-format disk image of a physical storage volume created by a source computer, the multiple-format disk image being a virtual representation of the physical storage volume and including volume information describing a plurality of file system formats employed by one or more storage volumes; and
at the target computer, reading the volume information from the disk image.

31. (Currently Amended) A system for accessing computer-readable files having a source computer and a target computer, the target computer comprising:

a processor; and

a disk image driver that, when executed by the processor, enables a disk image resident at the source computer to be mounted at the target computer, the disk image being a mountable virtual representation of a physical storage volume coupled to the source computer and the disk image including a plurality of computer-readable files stored on the storage volume, the disk image driver having access to the files stored on the disk image in different file formats.

32. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 31, wherein the disk image driver is adapted to provide to the target computer files in a file format utilized by the target computer.

33. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 31, wherein the disk image driver is adapted to access files stored on the disk image in different file formats.

34. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 31, wherein the storage volume is formatted according to a disk operating system (DOS), and a disk drive at the target computer is formatted according to a Hierarchical File System (HFS).

35. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 31, wherein the storage volume is formatted according to HFS, and a disk drive at the target computer is formatted according to DOS.

36. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 31, wherein the disk image driver maintains a list of file formats that the disk image driver is capable of recognizing.

37. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 31, wherein the disk image is mounted at the target computer as a local volume having a file system format that is different than the file system format of the storage volume.

38. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 31, wherein the disk image is mounted at the target computer as a remote volume, which can be accessed by the target computer through a communication network.